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FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

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at 10 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 40th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MROZIEWICZ (Poland)

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- General debate, consideration of and action on draft resolutions on international security agenda items

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 67 AND 68

GENERAL DEBATE, CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AGENDA ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN: Today, we begin the next phase of our work, devoted to consideration of questions concerning international security. This year there are two agenda items related to that subject, the first entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region" (agenda item 67) and the second entitled "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security" (agenda item 68).

Although it addresses specific questions, the second agenda item is broad enough in its scope to allow consideration of a wide range of various security issues facing the international community, and, in fact, that opportunity has been used for many years to voice particular security concerns or to share ideas on numerous aspects of global, as well as regional, security.

(The Chairman)

Needless to say, this particular item has almost always had the longest list of documents. Without exaggeration, almost every important event in international relations has been recorded in a document issued under this item, bearing also, in many cases, a symbol of documentation of the Security Council.

None the less, the results of the Committee's deliberations have been, for many reasons, rather modest and usually of a general nature. The time was not ripe for applying a businesslike approach to the questions of international security.

The political atmosphere, however, has changed radically since then, following the democratic transformations in Eastern and Central Europe. The cold war has ended and the division of the world into military blocs has disappeared. The Gulf conflict has consolidated the United Nations and enhanced the Organization's effectiveness with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security. This window of opportunity should not be closed.

The proceedings of the present session of the General Assembly prove that the international community has already taken a more imaginative and realistic approach in this regard. The scope of international security has been extended well beyond the traditional military dimension. Such other interrelated dimensions as the political, economic and environmental, as well as the social and humanitarian, have also been given due priority. A growing interest in introducing appropriate confidence- and security-building measures in various regions is moving the world gradually towards greater openness and transparency, thus making for less mutual suspicion among countries and a more accurate perception of each other.

(The Chairman)

It has been generally recognized that the United Nations should enhance its effectiveness in fulfilling its main responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. There is also a prevailing conviction that mechanisms should be developed to allow the United Nations and its Security Council to prevent and discourage aggression, effectively control the build-up of arms, and deal with humanitarian and ecological problems spawned by armed conflicts.

During the debate in the General Assembly, a good number of proposals have been put forward concerning a new concept of international security and the ways and means of making the United Nations stronger, more effective and more relevant to challenges that arise. I believe this Committee has the necessary potential to consider all the proposals in a spirit of cooperation and with a willingness to make the best use of them for the benefit of the international community and of our Organization.

Mr. SARDENBERG (Brazil): Having listened to your comments, Mr. Chairman, I should like to preface my statement by saying that my delegation shares the concerns you mentioned and your views about the need for imaginative and realistic approaches to the issue of strengthening international security and enhancing the Organization's capacity in that field. We also share your opinion regarding the First Committee's potential in dealing with this matter. We think that potential should be given practical effect with the support and participation of all delegations in the discussions on this item.

In an earlier statement before the Committee, I underscored the basic interrelationship between democracy, development and disarmament in sustaining

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

the new structure of peace that is to emerge in the aftermath of the cold war. Today I wish to extend my reflections a step further, and dwell on the fundamental correlation between peace and security.

As is widely recognized nowadays, peace is not merely a state characterized by the absence of war. It is a broad and dynamic process of fostering harmony among nations by strengthening mutual confidence, understanding and a shared perception of fairness in international relations. Likewise, security should not merely be the attainment of stability by military means, but also the consolidation of the relaxation of tensions by a common stake in the preservation of a just world order. As we are searching for relevant parameters to guide us in a new phase in history, we should turn to a renewed understanding of collective security, anchored not on the individual might of States, but rather on the collective right of the international community.

When we hail, nowadays, the revitalization of multilateralism and the return to the pristine purity of the Charter, we should have first and foremost in our minds the purposes and principles of the United Nations, inscribed in Articles 1 and 2. The maintenance of international peace and security through collective endeavours, the development of friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, international cooperation in economic, social, cultural and humanitarian fields, as well as the promotion of human rights - these constitute the very essence of our Organization's mandate.

Sovereign equality of Member States, fulfilment in good faith of the obligations assumed under the Charter, peaceful settlement of disputes, refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

or political independence of any State and non-intervention by the Organization in matters essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of States - these are the cardinal principles to be universally observed under the Charter.

The strengthening of international peace and security calls for the strengthening of the United Nations as a whole and the strengthening of the observance of the Charter. In recognizing the need for collective endeavours for the maintenance of international peace and security, the authors of the Charter sought to enhance a relationship of interdependence among Member States, based on the coordination of equals rather than subordination of the many to a few.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

Likewise, although the principal organs of the United Nations were given specific responsibilities, there was no intention of establishing a hierarchical differentiation among them, but rather a system of mutual complementarity. Their proper functioning an a coordinated and harmonious way would be the best guarantee of efficiency in the maintenance of international peace and security.

In that regard there is an urgent need to enhance appropriate parameters to guide their proper functioning so that the perception of their legitimacy can be widely shared by the membership at large. Such parameters could include the following: clear accountability before the whole membership of the United Nations; democratic, transparent procedures; non-selectivity in the observance and enforcement of resolutions; predictability in working methods; and fairness and even-handedness in the Organization's positions on all issues.

It is undeniable that there are new and urgent items on the agenda of the Organization concerning international peace and security. But I should caution members that not all new items are urgent and that not all urgent items are new. The strategic confrontation among the super-Powers has subsided, and a welcome reversal of the nuclear-arms race is beginning. But new concerns regarding the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction have emerged. Many regional centres of tension persist, especially in the Middle East, and old and renewed antagonisms with historical and ethnic roots seem to be rekindling in other areas.

Concerns have been expressed that the military expenditures of the world should be curtailed, especially by calling on developing countries to reduce their arms acquisitions in order to allocate better the flow of economic aid.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

But some of the measures suggested address only the symptoms, not the causes. In order to put the question of military expenditure in proper perspective, we should remember that overall world military expenditures have reached $1 trillion a year, of which the industrialized countries account for 80 per cent and the developing countries for the remaining 20 per cent.

In absolute and even more in per capita terms, the disparities are obvious. If the industrialized countries would reduce their military expenditures by a mere 10 per cent, there would be an extra $80 billion which could be channelled to the economic development of less favoured countries and regions. The United Nations could examine a creative and constructive way of spurring a disarmament race among countries which have the highest military expenditures in order to reallocate much-needed extra funds to the revitalization of international cooperation for development.

There are also interesting and stimulating suggestions concerning the role of preventive diplomacy by the United Nations. Take, for instance, the definition of peace-making contained in a draft resolution on peace-keeping operations on which the Special Political Committee is to take action today:

> "... peace-making activities of the Secretary-General, which are his good offices, mediation, conciliation and other diplomatic efforts, conducted with due respect for the sovereignty of Member States, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, constitute an essential function of the United Nations, and are among the important means for the prevention, containment and resolution of disputes and for maintaining international peace and security." (A/SPC/46/L.9, fifth paragraph of the preamble)

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

That is an apt description of the effective role of the Secretary-General in his multifaceted mandates fulfilled with the full backing of the membership of the United Nations.

As to the performance of peace-making and preventive diplomacy activities by other bodies, such as the Security Council or the General Assembly, the matter should be subject to ample and thorough discussion by the membership of the United Nations with a view to examining their parameters, effectiveness and cost.

In fact, preventive diplomacy is exactly what the purposes and principles of the United Nations as contained in Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter are all about. In order to address the multifaceted aspects of international peace and security, the strengthening of international economic cooperation is a relevant modality of preventive diplomacy. Agile channelling of resources needed by developing countries to address their urgent developmental necessities would be one important way of preventing crises and conflicts from erupting. This would also amount to a much more economical and efficient option than large-scale, expensive and politically sensitive peace-keeping operations.

The Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security has retained its validity and timeliness 21 years after its adoption. That reflects, on the one hand, the foresight of those who drafted it, but also, on the other hand, what laggards we have been in implementing its recommendations.

For one thing, the economic gap between developed and developing countries - which is closely and essentially correlated with the strengthening of the security of all nations and the establishment of lasting international

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peace, as emphatically reiterated in the Declaration - has been neither eliminated nor reduced, but has rather increased in most cases.

Universal respect for and full exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the elimination of the violations of those rights - which are also urgent and essential to the strengthening of international security, as, again, solemnly reaffirmed in the Declaration - have been achieved only selectively. While welcoming the encouraging progress achieved in recent times in many regions of the globe, we must still strive to achieve this in its entirety, in the political, economic and social spheres and at the individual and collective levels. In that regard, it is fundamental that democracy and the rule of law be firmly upheld and respected by all countries.

In sum, there being a close relationship among the strengthening of international security, disarmament and development, as affirmed in the Declaration, progress towards any one of those objectives must be translated into concurrent progress towards the others. As we can see, continuous efforts are still needed for the realization of the noble and urgent priorities set forth more than two decades ago.

In his address at the opening of the general debate at this session of the General Assembly, the President of Brazil, Fernando Collor, stressed that we face the challenge of reshaping the world and of building a peace that will not be the offspring of the constant threat of war. He further pointed out that the political task of peace-building does not take place in a vacuum, as it should take into account multifarious dimensions.

Brazil firmly believes that democracy, development and disarmament should constitute the foundations sustaining the new structure of peace. Promoting

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

them should be considered, not as a matter of selective preferences for a country or group of countries, but rather as a political, economic and ethical imperative for the international community as a whole.

As ideological and stratetgic confrontation recedes and as democratic values gain the upper hand internationally, it should now be possible to strengthen international peace and security through cooperative action and shared values.

The United Nations and this Committee now have a unique opportunity to lead the world into a new phase of international relations, and we must not miss that opportunity, for the sake of succeeding generations.

Mr. HIENSCH (Netherlands): I have the honour to make a statement on behalf of the European Community and its 12 member States concerning international security - agenda items 67 and 68.

The subject of our deliberations today concerns the very heart and the main purpose of the United Nations: the maintenance of international peace and security.

The European Community and its member States believe that peace and security can be achieved only through full observance of the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations and in other relevant international obligations under international law. They wish to recall the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of peace and security as well as the obligation of all Member States of the United Nations to implement its resolutions.

The European Community and its member States are convinced that ultimately there can be no alternative to dialogue, negotiations and peaceful solutions when dealing with international problems and conflicts. This does not imply, however, that when international law has been transgressed, and the transgressor fails to respect the norms of international law, other options cannot be considered or applied. The resolute approach of the Security Council during the Gulf crisis has shown that the Council constitutes an essential instrument to assert and restore international peace and security once it has been violated. The moral and political authority the Organization has gained should be built upon in order further to enhance the Council's effectiveness.

The improved international climate enables the Security Council to exercise its full responsibilities under the Charter. This has been

(Mr. Hiensch, Netherlands)

demonstrated not only by the Council's response during the Gulf crisis, but also by its role in the solution of other regional conflicts, through, inter alia, the increasing deployment of peace-keeping operations. The European Community and its member States welcome this development and call upon all Member States of the United Nations to combine their efforts to reinforce the positive development we have witnessed over the last year.

One of the main opportunities provided by the increased political efficacy of the Security Council and its ability to act in concert lies in the area of the peaceful settlement of disputes. The options the Council has at its disposal - for instance, the dispatch of fact-finding missions - are differentiated enough to respond to the different threats to international peace and security.

The increasingly important role of the Security Council also provides new opportunities for the Secretary-General in the peaceful settlement of disputes. The European Community and its member States take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the patient and persistent ways in which the Secretary-General, with the untiring support of his staff, has successfully taken initiatives to find peaceful solutions in the past, and the ways in which he continues to promote peaceful solutions to existing international problems as well as to prevent the emergence of new conflicts.

The maintenance and enhancement of international security depends on responsible behaviour in relations between States. Such behaviour should take account of the provisions contained in Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter, prohibiting the threat or the use of force, as well as other, wider considerations. However, the responsible conduct of international affairs by

(Mr. Hiensch, Netherlands)

States aimed at the maintenance of international and national security requires more than just refraining from aggression.

The European Community and its member States are therefore pleased to note that in the wake of events in recent years international relations can increasingly be characterized by a sense of common values and shared responsibilities. This development is to be welcomed, as the world is becoming more and more interdependent, not least when it comes to security. New prospects for international cooperation should therefore be realized for the benefit of all.

Although many regional conflicts have been resolved during the last year, some remaining conflicts and other, newly emerging conflicts pose a threat to international peace and security. In this world, in which the community of nations is interdependent, these problems place a heavy burden on all. Dialogue and cooperation are the best answers to security problems at both the global and regional levels. The European Community and its member States trust that serious efforts to that end will be made at every regional level, making use of the experience of others in this regard, for the Twelve consider security also to be a matter of regional concern, as recognized by Chapter VIII of the Charter.

In the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe the 38 European and North American member States have developed norms of behaviour which, while based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, clearly go beyond them in scope and commitment. The Charter of Paris, concluded by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) summit of November 1990, spells out the new democratic consensus in Europe, declaring,

(Mr. Hiensch, Netherlands)

inter alia, the observance and full exercise of human rights and the foundation of freedom, justice and peace, as well as economic liberty, social justice and environmental responsibility, to be indispensable for prosperity.

Strengthening not only the norms but also the mechanism for crisis management of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is a priority of the European Community and its member States. The use that has been made of the emergency mechanism of CSCE in Europe since the start of the crisis in Yugoslavia further highlights the importance of regional arrangements dealing with, inter alia, security issues.

The assertion of national interests should not detract from the concept of security based on cooperation and shared values. The CSCE approach to security indicates that security in itself is a concept that has various dimensions, not limited to its military aspects. Respect for human rights and the need for economic and social development are also important dimensions if security is to last and have true meaning. The advance of human rights and fundamental freedoms we have witnessed over the last few years cannot but serve to enhance international security. The effective exercise of the protection and promotion of human rights is, in the view of the European Community and its member States, inseparable from the pursuit of international peace and security.

The Twelve welcome in this light the proposals made by the Mediterranean nations to increase cooperation in the region. The European Community and its member States note in this context the proposal for the convening of a conference on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean. The Twelve consider it worth while that the countries of the Mediterranean cooperate more

(Mr. Hiensch, Netherlands)

closely, on the basis of principles and measures capable of enhancing stability and security, and encouraging economic and social progress.

States should demonstrate respect for international peace and security by refraining from the threat or the use of force. They should also do this by engaging in measures of arms control, arms reduction and confidence-building.

The European Community and its member States are convinced that the experience of the intensive arms-control negotiations has highlighted the relevance of a regional dimension to security, based on a process of dialogue and negotiations. Although some countries in their respective regions may still find themselves at the beginning of such a process, it is clear that a regional approach to arms control remains as important as ever to achieving regional and even international peace and security.

(Mr. Hiensch, Netherlands)

I would like to conclude by stating that it remains essential for the international community to stimulate and deepen current awareness of the common interest in strengthening international peace and security. The member States of the European Communities reaffirm their commitment to this end as well as their willingness to cooperate with others in order to explore further ways to strengthen international peace and security.

Mr. ABDUL GHAFFAR (Bahrain) (interpretation from Arabic): International security is a question of vital importance for all the States of the world. We must therefore ponder the new questions being asked by the international community concerning the future of and developments pertaining to the issue of international security. The importance of such questions stems from the fact that international politics have developed a new pattern of relations between countries following the end of the cold war with all its tensions, contradictions and feverish rivalries between East and West.

When speaking of international security, one fundamental question must be asked: what is the ultimate objective of international security in the new world order that is slowly emerging from the debris of the cold war? Does this security aim at achieving permanent stability and more progress in improving the quality of life for all the peoples of the world, or does it aim merely at dealing on a temporary basis with questions of world security, and by so doing makes it possible for new political and social explosions to take place and undermine international security all over again.

Posing the question in such a manner requires us to think hard of how we can establish a global security system that would avoid idealistic thinking, keep in sight the objective realities of international politics and take into account changes and developments in our contemporary world. We believe that

(Mr. Abdul Ghaffar, Bahrain)

the first step in that direction should focus on the search for common denominators capable of producing patterns of cooperation and harmony among States, in the context of a new vision free from the ideological and strategic tunnel-vision of the cold war. The significance of such a step lies in the fact that the end of the cold war does not signal the end of regional crises and threats. As a matter of fact, there are those who believe that the end of the cold war could lead to wide-spread disputes in the absence of the system of crisis management that existed between the United States and the USSR throughout the cold war years.

This is where the role of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security within the framework of the new world order comes into play, as provided for by Article 1 of the Charter, which states that the purposes of the United Nations are:

> "to maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace".

The experiences of the present century have shown that no real international security can be established if it is not maintained on a global scale. The United Nations can play an important role in devising measures that would lead to the establishment of such a system by using its potential in defining and implementing confidence-building measures and agreements relating thereto, by encouraging Member States to engage in negotiations on the foundations of the new international security system, and by creating the appropriate political climate in which the aforementioned agreements and international commitments can be concluded and reaffirmed.

(Mr. Abdul Ghaffar, Bahrain)

Social, economic and political factors have become an integral part of the new concept of international security. Therefore, there is great need for constructive dialogue and positive cooperation between the States of the world in order to establish new security systems to face the challenges of the twenty-first century. There is no doubt that, as a result of the positive political developments in international relations and the current state of détente, this decade is the right time to carry out a serious review of the entire situation relating to international peace and security.

There is evidence of a growing awareness within the United Nations of the need to rethink the questions of security in the light of collective human interests and values that call for a cooperative approach to the solution of the international, regional, social, economic and political problems, as provided for in the Charter. A collective effort is therefore needed to establish a new international security system that would enable peoples and nations to ensure their rights, protect their interests and reffirm their identities through cooperation rather than conflict, rivalry or an arms race with others.

The future of this planet depends on the establishment of a global, non-discriminatory and effective international security system that would encompass all States on the basis of cooperation and dialogue. In this regard, the international community is called upon now more than ever before to contribute to the establishment of this system through the adoption of effective collective measures against any breach of peace and security, the resolution of crises and conflicts, the halting of the arms race, and the encouragement of international dialogue and concerted efforts in this respect.

(Mr. Abdul Ghaffar, Bahrain)

We hope that cooperation and dialogue between States will enhance the new international security system. We also hope that the United Nations will play a positive and constructive role in the establishment of that system, drawing upon its rich experience in that field.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to remind members that the list of speakers for general debate on international security agenda items will be closed today at 6 p.m. Furthermore, I would like to remind representatives that the deadline for submitting any draft resolutions concerning items 67 and 68 is Monday, 25 November, at 6 p.m.

I therefore kindly ask those delegations wishing to address this Committee to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
41st meeting
held on
Monday, 25 November 1991
at 3 p.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 41st MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. ALPMAN (Vice-Chairman)	(Turkey)
later:	Mr. MROZIEWICZ (Chairman)	(Poland)

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- General debate, consideration of and action on draft resolutions on international security agenda items (continued)

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In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Alpman (Turkey), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 67 AND 68 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE, CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. HASSAN (Sudan): I should like at the outset to congratulate the Chairman on his excellent and very effective conduct of the First Committee's deliberations. His diplomatic skills and experience have led to a successful outcome so far. The congratulations of the delegation of the Sudan go also to the officers of the Committee and the members of its Secretariat.

The end of the cold war presents the United Nations with both an opportunity and a challenge. The scope of the work of the United Nations has now widened, ranging from peace-keeping to the protection of the environment, from the elimination of chemical weapons to the monitoring of elections and from the coordination of development assistance to the control of the flow of conventional arms. It is very important to stress in this connection that what has opened new opportunities for the United Nations is not the Gulf War, nor its aftermath, but the end of the cold war. The way in which the Gulf War was conducted was due to the end of the cold war.

The international community is at the threshold of a new phase in the history of humanity, and in the course of that phase many of the concepts that prevailed in the past will be changed. In my country's view, the new world order means a radical reconsideration of the strategic, military, economic, social and human spheres. We hope that the change will be positive and imbued with lofty humanistic ideals for all peoples: the prevalence of justice for

(Mr. Hassan, Sudan)

all, the application of one standard to all and provision for the human dignity of all peoples, allowing them to exercise their right to self-determination and refraining from interference in their internal affairs. Above all, the Organization should play a constructive and positive role and should not be used as a tool for achieving the narrow interests of any one nation or group of nations, nor driven from its principles and objectives, which ensure justice for all.

The establishment of a new world order should not be the exclusive prerogative of the developed and militarily strong countries. The new world order is a transformation in which every nation should take part, in the interest of the small countries. The destiny of the world should not be shaped by an elite group of States that enjoy great economic, industrial, technical and military power. We should not revert to the days of the old colonialism, no matter how it may change its skin or its techniques in imposing its influence on others. In the contemporary context we are all partners, with a shared duty and a common responsibility to enable future generations to lead a decent life and enjoy the fruits of human creativity and the blessings of an advanced civilization whose ultimate goal is the happiness of mankind.

My country has always maintained a policy of respect for and observance of the principles of the United Nations as embodied in its Charter, and it is aware that, to be viable, international relations in today's world must be based on the strictest adherence to the rules of international law and to respect for other principles, such as the non-use of force or threat of force in international relations. Those principles, together with the peaceful settlement of disputes between States, are of paramount importance in maintaining peace and security.

(Mr. Hassan, Sudan)

The primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security resides with the Security Council. The exercise of the veto right in the Council by the five permament members obstructs the full democratic functioning of the Council. The veto power gives responsibility for decisions on the maintenance of international peace and security to only a third of the Council's membership, which is quite unfair. We believe that the veto right should be repealed and that the membership of the Council should be increased.

In my Government's opinion, in order to guarantee that international peace and security will prevail, it is necessary to implement such measures as the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and the dismantling of military blocs and alliances. In that connection I refer to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which, after the dismantling of the Warsaw Pact, has become meaningless and purposeless.

The international community should demonstrate its strictest adherence to the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, adopted in 1970. In fact, the recommendations of that Declaration enhance international peace and security, and we must strive hard to fulfil those recommendations in all their aspects, political, economic and social.

International security and peace are not merely military. They also involve socio-economic factors. While the gap between East and West has been partially closed, suspicions and differences between North and South remain deep. The United Nations should be more effective in serving the aspirations of the developing countries, which constitute the majority of its Members. The economic crisis now facing the developing countries, including in particular the crushing weight of their foreign debt, which is impeding their entire economic activity, has a direct impact on world stability. It is

(Mr. Hassan, Sudan)

crucial that a just and equitable solution to the problem should be found. Without development, there will be no peace. The secure world of the future is linked to the creation of a new structure of international economic relations based on the principles of justice and equality. We cannot talk of peace so long as poverty, hunger and disease prevail in the third world.

In conclusion, I should like to refer to the excellent outcome of the high-level panel discussion held at Atlanta on 8 June 1991 under the auspices of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). During that discussion it was stressed that the maintenance of peace and security requires the development of a system of collective security assured by the United Nations, which would be vested with the monopoly on the use of force under appropriate conditions and rules as defined by the Charter. In fact, the creation of a reliable system of international peace and security involves more than reacting, no matter how forcefully, to a crisis that has already happened. It requires both the creation of conditions in which peace can be maintained and the capacity to anticipate and prevent breaches of the peace. The United Nations should have the capacity for preventive diplomacy and peace-making, and it should have the means to exercise it.

(Mr. Hassan, Sudan)

In this regard the Secretary-General, in his annual report on the work of the Organization for 1991, said:

"In my previous annual reports, I have, time and again, dwelt on what preventive diplomacy by the United Nations requires. The main problem today is the same as before: the lack of means at the disposal of the United Nations to maintain an impartial and effective global watch over situations of potential or incipient conflict. Preventive diplomacy presupposes early warning capacity, which, in turn, implies a reliable and independently acquired database. At present, the pool of information available to the Secretary-General is wholly inadequate." (A/46/1, p. 7)

Accordingly, we hope that the United Nations will be provided with adequate means to translate "preventive diplomacy" from a phrase into a working reality, so that we may live under a viable world order based on the principles of peace and justice, as articulated in the Charter.

Mr. O'BRIEN (New Zealand): I wish to offer a few observations on behalf of New Zealand on the international-security situation and the place of the international-security item in the Committee's work.

It is in some ways ironic that we choose to wait until the final days of the Committee's session before turning formally to the issue of international security. I use the word "formally" advisedly, because security has, of course, been a paramount consideration over the past four weeks as the Committee has debated and taken action on the disarmament items on its agenda.

Disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, has, of course, provided the focus of the First Committee's work for many years. For much of that time weaponry and the means of destruction were accumulated at an alarming rate.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

The world in general, and the Committee in particular, had and still has a responsibility to address that vital issue.

But today it is increasingly evident that our world situation is evolving. In this Committee, and in the debates being held elsewhere at this session of the General Assembly, delegations, including my own, have had the opportunity to welcome the enormous shifts now under way in world affairs. As the representative of the Sudan has just said, we are all coming to terms with a new situation engendered by the vastly changed relationship between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the commencement of the long-awaited Middle East peace process and the pleasingly positive developments in southern Africa.

In one important sense, those developments and others like them are the welcome culmination of years of effort in this Organization and outside it to build a better and safer foundation for our world. The developments that are happening now are those for which we have worked and for which this Organization can take a share of the credit.

But in another, equally important, sense we are stepping into the unknown. What is happening now is a revolution in international affairs that will have deep and abiding effects on all countries, large and small. I am not referring solely to the changing political situation between the major Powers, or within certain regions. Important changes are also taking place in the economic relationships between States and in the importance we attach to critical areas, such as environmental protection.

It is also clear that those changes, individually and in combination, are already having a major impact on international security in many parts of the world. Old certainties are disappearing and new challenges are being posed.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

The unilateral disarmament measures which the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics recently announced are an important contribution to a process of gradual reduction in armaments which is occurring in many countries, though unfortunately not in all. Important as those measures are, however, we face a situation in which disarmament cannot be seen as the sole factor in improving our security.

The changing condition of the world has highlighted the role which other mechanisms have to play. I refer in particular to the importance of international law, collective security and the enhancement of dialogue and cooperation between States. This is an integral part of good and responsible governance, which all must hope will become a norm in international relations.

New Zealand believes that what is sometimes described as the emergent new world order must continue to be underpinned by a system of collective security embodied in a variety of cooperative frameworks. The United Nations is, of course, in its design, a way of providing collective security in a global framework. During the period of East-West tension the system was not capable of working as had originally been intended. But the end of that confrontation means that we now face the challenge of adapting the ideal of collective security to the world in which we now live.

In recent years the potential of the United Nations has already proven itself in various ways, including peace-keeping, peacemaking, the protection of human rights and the enhancement of political pluralism. There are undoubtedly opportunities to capitalize further upon that progress. Now that the ideological rift between East and West is being healed, there are new opportunities for States to cooperate across old boundaries. We have already

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

seen the far-reaching effects of this in Europe, and also in the efforts being made to settle conflicts in other parts of the world.

In the Asia-Pacific region, which is the one of most direct concern to my country, the East-West rapprochement and economic success are producing a variety of positive effects. They are occurring more gradually than events in Europe, thus reflecting the particular nature and complexion of the situation of the Asia-Pacific region.

New Zealand has welcomed the efforts being made to improve dialogue and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, with the aim of resolving disputes. There has been notable progress in some areas, such as Cambodia. We hope that similar progress will be possible elsewhere.

In finding ways to enhance our region's security, Governments there have the experience of others available to them. Nevertheless, arrangements for security management in one region are not necessarily a model for others. In the diverse Asia-Pacific region it is important to focus on the potential of existing processes, such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council and the South Pacific Forum. Improving regional dialogue, cooperation and understanding in these various ways offers new opportunities to enhance regional security.

New Zealand seeks to be an active participant in regional security affairs and pays particular interest to the security of the South Pacific. For countries in this area, problems of military security are often less significant than the continuing challenges posed by geographical remoteness, a narrow economic base, overexploitation of natural resources by outsiders and environmental degradation.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

It may indeed be that in the future the diverse security problems faced by Pacific islands will be more representative of problems perceived by all countries.

For some years now it has been accepted that international security spans a much wider range of issues than the traditional focus in this Committee and elsewhere on armaments might have suggested. As the interdependence of nations grows, so growing attention is being paid to economic and environmental dimensions of security which affect us all.

For countries such as New Zealand, security has always had a strong economic dimension. We believe that an open and liberal global trade system can be a cornerstone for prosperity and security. Without further improvements in that system, such as those now being sought in the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the hard-won progress along the road of political pluralism and democracy in many parts of the world will be put at risk. This illustrates neatly and precisely the way in which the political and economic dimensions of security are indeed vitally linked.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

Another way in which this connection is vividly drawn is in the environmental field. The threat that environmental degradation poses to the planet is well recognized. For some countries, such those in the South Pacific area faced with rising sea levels, environmental problems are a threat to their very existence. Only through collective efforts can these problems be adequately addressed.

As the security agenda has widened, so too has the work of the United Nations in these fields. It is important to recognize that the ideals of collective security developed in the Charter to protect national security have an equal application in respect of broader security issues. For small countries, too, they offer the opportunity to contribute to the process of decision making and implementation in ways that enhance collective responsibility for our future.

With its responses to the Gulf War, the United Nations system received a new and much-needed revitalization in so far as military security is concerned. It is important that we recognize that other collective efforts - such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) talks in Geneva or the forthcoming Rio summit on the environment - must be treated with the same commitment and sense of purpose. They too have a substantial contribution to make to collective security.

The importance of collective action to address security problems highlights the role which the General Assembly must play. Of course, the various items which comprise the broad security agenda are not solely the business of the First Committee but are present to varying degrees right across the agenda of all the Committees of the General Assembly.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

Yet the First Committee retains its particular responsibilities in the relationship between disarmament and international security issues. In this respect, the Committee is well placed to provide a relevant forum to address the new conditions prevailing in the area of disarmament and international security. Already, the Committee is becoming more focussed. It is dealing with fewer resolutions than in the past, and a greater degree of consensus now prevails than previously.

My delegation takes the view that the time has come, perhaps, to consider whether the Committee should reassess the disarmament and security distinction we have now imposed on ourselves. One general debate embracing disarmament and international security, while retaining the Committee's traditional focus on issues related to armaments, would enable us to address issues in their broader, integrative context. There may also be flow-on effects in terms of rationalizing the resources which delegations and the Secretariat are required to devote to this debate.

I must emphasize that the Committee should not lose sight of its particular international security responsibilities. But the new conditions which countries around the world now face make it more important than ever before that States share perceptions on security developments. This Committee and the General Assembly as a whole offer the opportunity to address these issues in an open and constructive way. One hopes that the opportunities offered to discuss security issues will be the more widely taken up.

The United Nations has never been better placed to shoulder its responsibilities as an ultimate guarantor of all States' security. It would be naive, of course, to think that all States share an absolutely common view

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as to what their security entails. But some major differences have been put aside. In recent weeks, the two major Powers have set us an example - and a challenge. We should not let remaining uncertainties prevent us from sharing perceptions about the challenges of enhancing international security together.

Mr. JIN Yongjian (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The international situation is undergoing profound changes. While some old questions have yet to be solved, many new problems have emerged. It is quite appropriate that, under such circumstances, we have gathered here to review the item of international security.

Over the past year, the military confrontation between the East and West has gradually disappeared. The Gulf War has ended and the sovereignty, independence and legitimate Government of Kuwait have been restored. Some regional hot spots have been moving towards political settlement. The North and the South of Korea are improving their relations through continued dialogue and consultations, gradually removing antagonism and estrangement and working for the eventual independent and peaceful reunification of the nation.

With the signing of the agreement on a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodian conflict, the 13-year-long Cambodian question has finally embarked on the road towards a comprehensive settlement. The situation in southern Africa has continued to ease. A peace agreement has been signed in Angola. The South African question is progressing towards political settlement and the Western Sahara question is also on the way to political solution. For the first time, the parties concerned in the Middle East question sat at the negotiating table and began a dialogue.

In the field of disarmament, the United States and the Soviet Union signed the agreement on the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons and

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announced respectively some positive measures and proposals on the reduction, limitation of and control over nuclear weapons. The multilateral negotiation on the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons is accelerating in depth and has yielded marked progress.

The international community welcomes these changes, which are conducive to the maintenance of world peace and security. Nevertheless, people are increasingly conscious of the fact that the world is by no means tranquil. Turbulence and instability in the international situation are more noticeable, and new conflicts are in the making. Peace and stability have not come to the Gulf region. The Middle East remains full of contradictions and the Arab-Israeli conflict is far from being solved. Ethnic, racial and religious differences are being exacerbated in a number of countries, including some in Europe. The national independence and territorial integrity of some countries are under threat while intense civil strife and political turmoil have caused serious damage in other countries. The grave situation confronting Yugoslavia has become a source of anxiety.

In the field of disarmament, while the momentum of the international arms race has waned, the arms race itself has not come to an end. Rather, its emphasis has switched to qualitative aspects and it is being extended to outer space. The recent changes in the Soviet Union, in particular, have aroused concern in the international community over whether nuclear weapons can be brought under strict control. Progress in the field of multilateral disarmament is still far from satisfactory. In the economic field, the disparity between the economic development of the North and that of the South is increasing and the gap between them is widening even more. This will not

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only adversely affect the sustained and stable development of the world economy but also become a significant threat to world peace, security and stability.

During this transitional period, when the old pattern is giving way to a new one, the direction our world will take and the kind of new international order that should be established have increasingly become questions that the people of the world must face squarely. Post-war history has demonstrated that the world cannot be dominated by super-Powers; nor can international affairs be monopolized by a few Powers. An order based on military might, power politics and the use or threat of force will, in the final analysis, be a fragile one. The practice of the strong lording it over the weak and the big bullying the small or infringing the sovereignty of other countries can only lead to conflicts and endanger regional and world peace and security. All this is doomed to failure in face of the joint opposition of the world's people. What the people of the world are expecting is not a new unipolar order but a just and reasonable new international order characterized by peace and stability. This is also the call of the times.

We are of the view that the international order of the future should conform to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter as well as to the principles governing international relations universally accepted by the international community and proved to be effective. We are in favour of the establishment of a new international order based on the five principles: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.

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These principles outline the most fundamental norms governing international relations, accord with the purposes and principles of the Charter, and reflect the intrinsic characteristics of new international relations, the core of which is respect for the rights of the people of all countries to decide their own destiny. There are different social systems, values, ideologies, cultural backgrounds and historical heritages in the world. It is unrealistic and, indeed, dangerous to peddle a uniform model in the world.

We understand that national development and human progress require a peaceful international environment and the key to such an environment lies in the following principles:

All countries should respect each other's State sovereignty, treat each other as equals, seek common ground while putting aside differences, engage in friendly cooperation and live with each other in harmony;

No countries should seek hegemony, manipulate international affairs or practise power politics;

All countries, big or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, are entitled to participate in the discussion and handling of international affairs as equal members of the world community;

Every country is entitled to choose its social, political, economic systems and mode of development in line with its own national conditions, and no countries, particularly the big Powers, should impose their own ideologies, values and modes of development on others;

All countries should observe the principle of mutual respect for the territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of other countries and should refrain from invading or annexing the territories of others on any pretext whatsoever; and

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Disputes among nations should be solved by peaceful means: the use or threat of force is not permissible in international relations.

China pursues an independent foreign policy of peace, and abides strictly by the above-mentioned principles. It is ready to work with other countries and to make its due contribution to the establishment of a just and reasonable new international order.

In order to safeguard international peace and security, the international community should continue its efforts to further accelerate the process of political settlement of regional hot-spot issues. At the same time, efforts should be made to remove the military and non-military threats to international peace and security.

To stop the arms race and realize effective disarmament represents an important approach to the removal of the military threat, the easing of world tension and the maintenance of international peace and security. In order to safeguard international peace and security, China has steadfastly opposed the arms race, and stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear, outer space, chemical and biological weapons, the prohibition of the development of any new weapons of mass destruction, and the drastic reduction of conventional armaments. China has adopted a constructive attitude towards arms control and disarmament and has taken a series of actions on its own initiative.

We welcome the initial disarmament moves made by the United States and the Soviet Union as well as the progress made in the process of conventional disarmament in Europe. It must be pointed out, however, that up to now, the actual situation as regards world armament has not undergone any fundamental changes. The agreement reached between the United States and the Soviet Union on the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons and some measures recently

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announced by them need to be implemented. And even after they are implemented, the two countries will still possess the largest nuclear arsenals in the world, capable of destroying the world several times over. They should, therefore, continue their efforts and act in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, shouldering in earnest their special responsibility for disarmament and should stop improving the quality of weapons and developing new types of weapons, including outer-space weapons. The arsenals of nuclear weapons thus reduced should all be destroyed and the nuclear warheads disposed of appropriately and the troops thus cut should be disbanded and armaments destroyed. None of them should be transferred to or redeployed in other regions. We also hold that the time has come for the drastic reduction and eventually the complete withdrawal of all troops and bases in other countries.

The key to the removal of the non-military threat to international peace and security lies in the establishment of a new international economic order. Peace and security cannot be separated from development. The core of the question of development is North-South relations. Without a fundamental improvement in North-South relations, it is difficult to maintain international peace and stability and failure to improve them is detrimental to both poor and rich countries. To promote common development, we must ensure that each and every country has the right to choose the social system, economic pattern and mode of development best suited to its own national conditions, to exercise effective control over its own national resources and their exploitation and to participate in the handling of international economic affairs. At the same time, the developed countries should respect and take into account the interests and needs of the developing countries,

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refrain from attaching any political conditions in providing assistance, strengthen their dialogue and cooperation with countries in the South, and make the necessary adjustments and reforms in commodity, trade, fund, debt, monetary, financial and other important fields of international economy. Only when countries help each other like passengers in the same boat, narrow the gap between North and South, and establish an equitable, mutually-beneficial and cooperative new international economic order, can turbulence and instability be removed once and for all, and world peace, security and development be promoted.

We are happy to note that over the past year, the United Nations, as the most important global organization in the world today, played an active role in maintaining world peace and security, promoting the political settlement of regional problems and strengthening international cooperation. Confronting the complexity and vicissitudes in the world situation, all members of the international community expect the United Nations to abide by the purposes of its Charter, to make continued and unswerving endeavours to play an even greater role in seeking a fair and reasonable solution to regional conflicts such as the one in the Middle East, in checking the arms race and promoting disarmament, in enhancing North-South dialogue, in helping the developing countries develop their national economies and overcome their economic difficulties, and in striving for the establishment of a fair and equitable new international order.

In order to maintain international peace and security all countries, and especially the permanent members of the Security Council, should abide by the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and handle State-to-State relations strictly in accordance with the five principles of

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peaceful coexistence. As a permanent member of the Security Council, China is ready to join with the rest of the United Nations Member States to perform duties set forth in the Charter, to actively support the work of our Organization and to contribute its share to the promotion of world peace, security and development as well as the establishment of a new international order.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs.

Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs): At this session, the First Committee is considering the items relating to international security in a radically changed international political and security environment. It is unanimously recognized that the world today is vastly different from what it was one or two years ago. With the end of the cold war, a new chapter is open in international relations. This truly historic development came about largely as a result of a peaceful process and brings fresh opportunities for peace and security.

(Mr. Safronchuk)

As Member States have often pointed out in the General Assembly and in the debate in this Committee, a new world order is emerging in which conditions are set for working out a collective security system along the lines envisaged in the United Nations Charter. The post-war security arrangements, based on the existence of military blocs and the balance of power, are gradually being replaced by a new pattern of inter-State relations.

The bipolar confrontation is giving way to new forms of partnership and cooperation, to mutual understanding and reasonable compromise. The prevailing international conditions impel States, regardless of their power and geographical position, to work together in a manner in which they did not work together before.

There is a growing consensus that peace and security will come only as a result of negotiation and compromise. On this basis progress has already been achieved in the settlement of a number of regional conflicts in various parts of the world. With the recent Madrid conference on the Middle East, the impasse in the peace process in this greatly tormented region appears to have been finally broken, and we all hope that the ongoing diplomatic efforts will lead to constructive and purposeful solutions of the problems of the Middle East.

It is a source of great satisfaction that the role of the United Nations has been enhanced in harmonizing and coordinating the actions of nations in the attainment of common goals and that the Organization is now moving from marginalization to the centre of world affairs. Member States, however, have expressed the desire that the Organization should be further strengthened and revitalized in order to respond more promptly and efficiently to the

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requirements of the new world order. United Nations organs, including this Committee, have great potential for action, and it must be put to full use for the benefit of peace and security, justice and international cooperation, based on the fundamental principles of the Charter.

It has been increasingly recognized that in today's world the international community is beginning to perceive the concept of security in wider terms, so that it should reflect all its essential components. Many Member States have said in the Committee that security in military terms alone is a perception that belonged to the confrontational period when the number of nuclear weapons in the arsenals of States was the determinant factor of security. In the present world situation, however, security cannot be dissociated from underdevelopment, poverty and illiteracy, violation of human rights, deterioration of the environment, drug abuse and terrorism. Of course, as nobody denies, disarmament and arms control remain the key element of international peace and security; they help to pave the way for political change, but the new world order requires concerted efforts urgently to solve other situations of tension and instability that are threatening international peace and security.

Given those considerations, I am sure the First Committee will approach the items on its agenda relating to international security with a new perspective, reflecting the current challenges facing the world. The Committee is considering the item entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region", and delegations have before them the report (A/46/523) of the Secretary-General on this matter.

In the general debate in the General Assembly some delegations suggested that Chapter VIII of the Charter, dealing with regional arrangements, should

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be re-examined, with a view to encouraging through the regional organizations the development of the pacific settlement of disputes on the initiative of States themselves or by reference from the Security Council. In this context, European countries have reiterated the growing role of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe as an important regional framework for peace and security for all the participating States. They likewise viewed with deep apprehension the new threats to security on the continent, and referred in particular to the situation in Yugoslavia. In their replies to the Secretary-General, as contained in his report, some States, while pointing to the close linkage between security in the Mediterranean and security in Europe and world wide, expressed concern about persistent tensions in the region and within its adjacent areas.

With regard to regional security, I should like to mention that the Secretary-General in his annual report on the work of the Organization paid special attention to the role of regional arrangements under Chapter VIII in the pacific settlement of disputes. He underlined in this regard the need for a close working relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations in order to avoid incoherence and fragmentation in peace efforts. In the same vein, some Member States have proposed a comprehensive and multi-channelled interplay between the United Nations peace-keeping efforts and the activities of regional organizations as a way to enhance and strengthen the machinery of peace and security.

It is extremely important in the present world circumstances that the activities of regional organizations and the work of the United Nations be developed in the closest cooperation on the basis of the principles embodied in the Charter, which binds together all States. With the end of the bipolar

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confrontation, regional security is undoubtedly acquiring a particular importance in the new security arrangements in the world, and efforts should be made to bring about a closer interrelationship of regional and global security through the United Nations system.

Another item under consideration in the Committee is entitled "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security". The Secretary-General submitted for the consideration of this question the report contained in document A/46/575. In their comments transmitted under this item some States expressed the view that the Declaration, although adopted more than 20 years ago, should remain in effect, and that compliance with it is acquiring particular importance in the changing world situation. The comprehensive nature of the concept of security was stressed as a requirement of the evolving world order. Similarly, the States pointed to the growing need for the United Nations to play a more pivotal role in international relations as an irreplaceable world institution for the promotion of peace and security.

Before concluding, I should like to express the hope that at this session the First Committee will take full advantage of the new international situation and work out fresh solutions and new approaches to the problems of the emerging world order. Let us hope that the spirit of cooperation which characterizes the current debate at the United Nations will provide a unique opportunity to look afresh at the concept of security and define a more active and assertive role for the Organization in discharging its main responsibility for the maintenance of world peace and security.

Mr. FOUATHIA (Algeria)(interpretation from French): The recent change in the international situation that has favored the rapprochement of the major military Powers has also opened up new prospects for a better approach to such primarily political questions as international security. Although, among other things, this development entails promises of peace, it does not unfortunately remove all the threats of the dangerous repercussions possible in international relations. Similarly, the current world situation, in which growing wealth constrasts with widespread poverty, cannot promise a new era completely favourable to international concord. In such circumsances, even when peace seems to be upheld in some regions, many challenges to international peace and security still exist elsewhere, and the urgency of new initiatives is making it increasingly urgent to deal with the major causes of instability and political crises. Thus, the priority task of the international community will be above all to ensure the implementation of the principles of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, which remain more than ever timely given a world situation that is as unstable as it is and that continues to contain the germs of major sources of conflict.

In such circumstances the United Nations, whose initial ambition was, inter alia, to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, must be fully rehabilitated in its abilities to assume faithfully its responsibilities. It is also called upon on this occasion, with the revival of the spirit of dialogue and joint action, to commit itself with greater firmness to promoting peace and security for the benefit of all mankind. New encouragement in that direction was provided by the non-aligned countries at their meeting last September at Accra.

Given the speed at which political changes are occurring, United Nations efforts to ensure a transition from an externally imposed system of selective

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security to the much-desired system of collective security are becoming an ever-more urgent necessity. The entire international community is calling for such efforts, and they are particularly desired by the economically weak countries, which have so far had to confront tragic situations that have often constrained them to turn away from national priorities to meet the pressing needs of an ever-more costly national defence.

As a result, the central role the United Nations will have to play must necessarily be geared towards the universal promotion of peace and security on the basis of full respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter. Similarly, it will be called upon effectively to take up such world problems as the elimination of sources of conflict and all forms of domination, the promotion of economic and social development, concrete disarmament measures, respect for human rights and the preservation of the environment.

If we agree that this is the major concern of the international community, we do so because international security is at once global and indivisible. Hence, it cannot be limited to a given region, even if it should be the most convulsive of all in the light of its past history, and the rest of the world, which includes the vast majority of mankind, ignored. Indeed, the desire for peace and security is a universal need that can never be totally subordinated to the exclusive benefit of military power or economic prosperity. Thus, security cannot be the exclusive privilege of the most powerful but must be a guarantee that the whole of mankind can live in peace and harmony. Even though it had been thought that the security of one region was the keystone of the universal edifice of global security, it would be a mistake to compartmentalize it or to subordinate it to a single regional dimension, thereby denying it to the rest of mankind the right or artificially establishing geographical limits for it.

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Thus, my delegation has always believed that the consideration of such an important question as international peace and security must enjoy special attention on the part of the international community. Similarly, my delegation feels that the question deserves the mobilization of all the efforts of the United Nations to ensure the establishment of a new system of international relations governed solely by dialogue and enlightened cooperation.

The notion of international security that has hitherto prevailed has shown its limits, in terms of both time and space. That notion, which was couched in terms of a centre and a periphery, inevitably entailed many uncertainties and, especially, considerable dangers. Thus, the centre would enjoy economic prosperity, permanent security and political stability, while the periphery, the vast majority of mankind, remained subject to economic uncertainty and exposed on a permament basis to insecurity and political instability. In the absence of lasting world peace and security for the benefit of all, such assymetry among the countries of a single planet, far from being corrected, would inevitably lead to threats and uncertainties to the stability of all parts of the world. Today, it is therefore much more urgent for the international community to undertake a reexamination of the question of international security through a multidimensional approach, one in which the military aspect would be viewed in tandem with other priorities, such as the respect of the right of peoples to self-determination, non-interference in the affairs of States, the settlement of long-standing conflicts, along with economic and social development, respect for human rights and environmental protection. That multi-topical approach would, in our opinion, strengthen a concept of international relations that would

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include all the global challenges to the international community that exist at the present time. In addition, there is a need to put particular emphasis on the close link between, on the one hand, the promotion of international peace and security and, on the other hand, problems linked to the phenomena of underdevelopment and poverty. Without the eradication of those two phenomena, peace cannot be other than precarious and international security dangerously affected. This was stated in unequivocal terms by the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at Accra last September.

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Because of its history and its geographical position, Algeria has assiduously followed developments in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) process. As far as my country is concerned, this process may ultimately turn out to be limited in its effects if the Mediterranean dimension is not taken into due account. In addition to the challenges arising in terms of the real disparity in development between its two shores, the Mediterranean itself is, relatively speaking, a region where the military presence, including nuclear forces, is one of the largest in the world.

That is why the countries of the south shore of the Mediterranean rightly emphasize the need in particular for expanding the topics for joint effort with a view to the security of the entire region, including in particular taking up the question of the Mediterranean dimension of security and cooperation in Europe. Thanks to the spirit that has gradually evolved, real prospects are opening up for diversified cooperation that can bring the two shores of the Mediterranean basin even closer together and initiate a new era of peace, stability, and economic and social progress in the entire region.

In mentioning the strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean arena, one cannot fail to emphasize once again the close link that exists between security in the Mediterranean and the persistence of economic and social inequalities in the coastal countries as well as the hotbeds of potential tension. There can no longer be any doubt that a just and lasting political settlement to the residual crises and conflicts in the Mediterranean region will contribute to reducing the military and naval presence there and will favour the promotion of regional and subregional

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cooperation capable of ultimately correcting the disparities in socio-economic development among the countries of the two shores.

Considerable efforts have therefore been made to come up with viable solutions to the inevitable political problems still pending. Such solutions must be based on respect for the principles of self-determination of peoples and of the sovereign equality of States. Certain regional crises are on the threshold of a new era favourable to their definitive settlement through dealing with the fundamental causes at the heart of their emergence.

Thus, the Madrid conference, to which my country was invited as an observer, opened up new prospects that could be very encouraging for the promotion of international peace and security in the Middle East on the basis of a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and its Gordian knot, the Palestinian question, leading towards the ultimate satisfaction of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

Algeria is pleased that the countries of the two shores of the Mediterranean basin have finally agreed to establish various types of relations and to work together on problems affecting the security of the region in its many aspects. Thus, a conference is planned in the near future on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean, the principle for which was agreed upon by the coastal States at the meeting of foreign ministers held in Rome in 1990. This is the culmination of tireless efforts undertaken since the beginning of the CSCE process.

Simultaneously, the coastal Mediterranean countries have continued to work to promote peace and security in the basin by further strengthening their traditional ties. None the less, peace and security throughout the Mediterranean remain exposed to such real dangers as continuing hotbeds of

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tension, ongoing military operations and activities in some parts of the Mediterranean, the disparity in levels of development, and the denial of the fundamental rights to self-determination and independence of the peoples of the region.

It was in the face of this situation and the dangers that have emerged as a result of recent upheavals in the world that the Arab Maghreb Union was established. The Union has recently acquired its own bodies and instruments for the promotion of the goals of economic integration and cooperation with other regional groups. At the same time that the structures of the Union were set in place, a forum of States of the western shore of the Mediterranean was born and subsequently expanded to 10 countries, including the five Maghreb States, the four countries of southern Europe and Malta. This forum, which is taking up the specific concerns of the countries in the western basin of the Mediterranean, proved at its second meeting to be an appropriate body for the promotion of dialogue among the Maghreb countries and the European Economic Community and for the building of solid relations between the two geographical groupings.

Indeed, following the meeting held in Rome in 1990, a joint conference was held in Algiers last October by the 10 coastal countries of the western basin of the Mediterranean at the level of foreign ministers. The declaration published at that time notes in particular the need to assure the security, peace and stability of all States in the region and to ensure respect for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the implementation of the Taif agreements on Lebanon and of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) on the withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon. Economically speaking, stress was placed on the need to establish financial

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instruments to ensure co-development of the entire region. It is this spirit that cannot fail to have a positive impact on the future work of the forum of the 10 States of the western Mediterranean basin and on the strengthening and consolidation of the various aspects of security in the Mediterranean.

Thus, plans have been made to hold a summit of the countries of the western Mediterranean basin in Tunis next January. That conference cannot fail to contribute to strengthening security and cooperation in the western Mediterranean. This dynamic of dialogue, collaboration and cooperation promises to develop the specific characteristics of the western area of the Mediterranean. All the efforts made in that regard are intended to bring about the commonly shared aim of all Mediterraneans to establish an area of peace, security and cooperation in this region of the world, which in the past was the theatre of bloody confrontation.

None the less, all these initiatives must not cause us to lose sight of the principles of the indivisibility and universality of security in the Mediterranean, which my country fully supports and to which it remains firmly committed. Furthermore, this dynamic in the western basin of the Mediterranean, and the joint efforts undertaken by the Balkan countries at the Tirana meeting, as well as other similar initiatives, are precautionary measures undertaken to improve the general political climate and to create conditions favourable to holding the conference on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean that has long been desired by the States of that region.

In conclusion, I take this opportunity to reaffirm my country's determination to continue to work indefatigably for the implementation of all the principles of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, which has kept all its validity, especially at a time of such upheavals with their attendant unpredictable consequences.

(Mr. Fouathia, Algeria)

International peace and security are not dependent solely on the absence of war operations, but are rather, and more especially, the result of economic and social cooperation that is capable of guaranteeing lasting stability and universality. While it has been announced that one era has ended and a new era full of promise is coming, the community of developing countries is entitled to the dividends of this change and especially to an urgent and adequate solution to their own particular problems.

Mr. METE (Albania): Mr. Chairman, as I am addressing the Committee for the first time, I should like to congratulate you and the officers of the Committee on your election and on your conduct of our deliberations.

The easing of tension and efforts fcr cooperation and peace among States have been major elements of the foreign policy of the Albanian State. Albania has always supported the concrete efforts made by other States for cooperation in the Balkan, Mediterranean and other regions and regards cooperation in all fields as a constructive element of peace and security among the countries of the Mediterranean region. As a Mediterranean country, Albania supports and is directly interested in endeavours made to strengthen security and cooperation in the region as part and parcel of international security and cooperation. It believes that true efforts for the strengthening of peace and security in order to promote cooperation among the countries of the region will help transform the Mediterranean region from an arena of potential military confrontation into a zone of peace.

In its foreign policy, the Republic of Albania sets great store by freedom, human dignity, the self-determination of peoples and the safeguarding of peace and cooperation. It is confident that such a policy is conducive to

(Mr. Mete, Albania)

confidence-building among neighbours and other nations. Albania will continue to pursue this policy, believing that in so doing it is making a great contribution to the good of the Balkan and Mediterranean regions, and it requires a similar contribution from other countries. As a Balkan, Mediterranean and European country, Albania gives priority attention to full support for any initiative intended to strengthen security and cooperation in the aforementioned regions. If the spirit of tolerance, understanding and respect for ethnic minorities and populations does not prevail in relations among neighbouring countries, it is impossible to talk of making a contribution to the strengthening of security and cooperation in the region of the Balkans, the Mediterranean and Europe. The example set by the European Community should be assessed as a model historic reality in the same way as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process, which can serve as a pattern for the Mediterranean region as well.

As a country on the Mediterranean, Albania is directly concerned with political, economic and military developments and the tense situations that arise in the region time and again. But tense situations in the Mediterranean are not a separate phenomenon; they are linked to the situation in the Middle East, the Gulf and elsewhere.

Contemporary developments in international relations, the independence and sovereignty of each country, and the will of the peoples to live in peace and friendship impose great responsibilities on each and every country of the Mediterranean and beyond to promote the process of dialogue, tolerance, cooperation and confidence-building through stable solutions, by peaceful means, based on observance of United Nations principles.

(Mr. Mete, Albania)

This year's events in the Gulf made possible an alliance of States under the auspices of the United Nations to end abnormal acts against the independence of small States. But the lesson we draw from such a concerted action by States must help us to embark on the path to a global solution of problems, because security cannot be divorced from mutual tolerance and a stable regional system of cooperation based on rules and principles accepted by all States.

The contribution to the easing of tension should be global, and any solution to the Middle East and Mediterranean problems has to be accompanied by efforts aimed at putting an end to hegemonic ambitions and the resumption of the arms race, the presence of foreign troops and weapons that destabilize the region, as well as to the violation of internationally accepted laws. Problems that have not yet been solved, such as that between the Arabs and Israel and the Lebanon and Cyprus issues, must be given priority. Efforts to settle them should help encourage cooperation among States to reach a global and gradual solution and create an equilibrium that should be conducive to the lowering of tension and the enhancement of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region.

The Albanian Government is of the view that strengthening security and cooperation among the Mediterranean countries and beyond, and the elimination of impeding factors and economic, political barriers contribute to the solution of the Middle East and Mediterranean problems and to the creation of a new tradition of security and mutual understanding. It also holds that an interrelation between the CSCE process and similar processes in the Mediteranean makes security and cooperation among the States of the Mediterranean, Europe and beyond tangible, continuous and stable.

(Mr. Mete, Albania)

Proceeding from these considerations, the Albanian Government makes a positive assessment of, and considers to be of interest, the proposal put forward at the meeting on the Mediterranean of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, held last year at Palma de Mallorca, for convening a conference on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean in the spirit of the Helsinki process. We also welcome the declaration of 10 October 1990 by the countries of the West Mediterranean on the holding of such a conference.

Like the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the conference that has been proposed should be based on the relevant United Nations decisions, and the United Nations should take a direct part in organizing and convening it. It is our firm belief that security, economic cooperation and human rights will underlie the work of the conference and that it will take due account of, and highlight, such issues as territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders, economic solidarity, the use of facilities with the aim of completely eliminating economic barriers, the renunciation of the use of force or the threat of force in the settlement of conflicts, an end to the arms race, as well as dialogue in the political, cultural and social fields.

To sum up, the Albanian delegation expresses its conviction that only through shared efforts by all participating States can we make a success of the conference on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean, and only thereby, can we draw up a set of principles and a lasting code of conduct in the areas of security, economic cooperation, the human dimension and democratic development in this region of vital importance for our countries, for Europe and beyond.*

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* The Chairman took the Chair.

Mr. WORONIECKI (Poland): I have the honour to make a statement today on behalf of the delegations of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, the Republic of Hungary and the Republic of Poland on questions related to international security.

Recently, rapid and fundamental changes have characterized the international scene. The long period of the cold war has come to an end and in its stead an epoch of profound and irreversible democratic transformation has begun in Eastern and Central Europe. The ideologically motivated division of Europe has become a thing of the past with the ultimate demise of its symbols - the Warsaw Treaty and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.

(Mr. Woroniecki, Poland)

The dismantling of the Berlin Wall and the unification of Germany were perhaps the most distinct proofs of how profound the change in the old continent was. The failure of the coup d'état in the Soviet Union this summer could be considered as its logical consequence and a spectacular victory of the democratic forces in that multi-ethnic State.

The date 1 July this year indeed marked a new watershed in the history of Europe as well as the world at large. That day, a Protocol - set out in document A/46/300 - was signed in Prague, terminating the validity of the Warsaw Treaty. The division of the continent into two opposing military blocs has been brought to an end.

The Warsaw Pact was an unfortunate product of the past, stricken for a long time by a crisis of identity. Over the years, with the repetitive proofs of its internal interventionist function, the Treaty gradually lost even the appearance of a security role which, it is to be noted, was from the very beginning highly problematical to its smaller member States. Later on the Pact became more and more a petrified instrument of Soviet political domination over those States.

The "Triangle States" were a driving force in the process of dismantling that military alliance, and they have also been in the forefront of democratic transformation in that part of Europe. As newly emerging democracies, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland strive for close institutional association with the European Community, broader contacts and closer links with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Western European Union and other tried and tested European institutions.

At the same time, the three States express strong support for the development of new structures of security and cooperation on the continent, in

(Mr. Woroniecki, Poland)

accordance with the all-European processes, and reaffirm their commitment to the letter and spirit of the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, which was signed in Paris at the conclusion of the summit meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation (CSCE) in Europe.

The three States are firmly convinced that, in addition to a number of objective reasons, there are common values which call for closer links between them - above all, respect for the rule of law, full implementation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The foundations for Czechoslovak-Hungarian-Polish cooperation were laid at meetings in Bratislava and, especially, in Visegrad, where a Joint Declaration was adopted, setting down principles and guidelines for concerted actions animated by the same aspirations. This subregional cooperation is clear proof of the viability and credibility of the "Triangle States" as new partners of all the democratic countries on the continent and beyond.

A month ago, on 6 October, the leaders of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland - Vaclav Havel, Jozsef Antall and Lech Walesa - met in Cracow to review their trilateral cooperation and to define the course of its further development. The outcome of that review was incorporated in a Declaration, also issued as a United Nations document (A/C.1/46/7). In the Declaration the leaders stressed that their cooperation constituted an essential contribution to the shaping of a new democratic international order in the region of Central and Central Eastern Europe.

Following the dissolution of the Warsaw Treaty and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, which prevented these countries from integrating with the rest of the continent, the principal task for Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland is full-scope integration into the European political, economic, legal

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and security systems. In practical terms, the three States aspire, first, for association with the European Communities, the institutionalization of their relations with NATO and, in general, the strengthening of the CSCE process and its institutions. The three countries are already members of the Council of Europe and are about to finalize their negotiations on association with the European Communities.

The three countries attach fundamental importance to safeguarding lasting security on the continent, especially in the subregion of Central and Eastern Europe. They regard Europe as a single and indivisible entity, where the security of each country is closely interlinked with the security of all others, thus making all-European security indivisible.

Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland are deeply committed further to develop and refine their existing political and economic cooperation and to coordinate closely their efforts aimed at building an all-European security system. They also strive to overcome all existing divisions in Europe and to foster new forms of cooperation between the countries of the continent in order to promote peace and enhance international security.

In Cracow the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the three States also held meetings where the present state and future perspectives of cooperation between their States and NATO were evaluated. Having expressed their satisfaction with contacts already maintained with the Alliance, the Ministers emphasized the need further to extend them so as to create conditions for direct involvement of the "Triangle States" in NATO's activities.

The three countries on whose behalf I have the honour to speak today note with satisfaction that the NATO countries have been contributing greatly to the process of democratization in Eastern and Central Europe, and have been

(Mr. Woroniecki, Poland)

gradually reformulating their external policy stance by taking into account the legitimate security concerns of the States of the subregion in question.

As security in Europe cannot be selective, Central and Eastern Europe should not become a grey, buffer or neutral zone. Owing to its geographical location, such an area would be bound to become an object of rivalry of the more powerful States. Such a turn of events would not be in the interests of either the Triangle or Europe as a whole.

Therefore, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland welcomed the position of the NATO ministerial session last June in Copenhagen - that the Alliance's security is inseparably linked to that of all other States in Europe. For the same reason, they also welcomed the decisions adopted at the NATO summit meeting held recently in Rome, which recognize the need further to strengthen the CSCE process, and also to establish mechanisms for regular consultations and cooperation on security matters between NATO and Eastern and Central European States as well as the Soviet Union.

Europe needs stability with security. Since security is indivisible, it is a common cause for all the CSCE States. The Helsinki process has been, and will remain, an important factor in the shaping of a common European security policy. Its mechanisms are designed to make political dialogue possible and to offer a means of preventing or resolving conflict situations. However, it is clear that those mechanisms still need refinement.

The "Triangle States", participating actively in that process, wish to add to it a new dimension: subregional cooperation in strengthening as well as in promoting regional and international peace and stability. Aware that every region, and subregion, has its own peculiar characteristics that have to be taken into account in the elaboration of mechanisms of cooperation, the

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three delegations hope that this brief overview of their perception of some aspects of international security and related mechanisms will be of interest to other delegations addressing the question of subregional approaches to international security.*

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* See A/C.1/46/PV.43, pp. 46 and 47.

Ms. MASON (Canada): At this stage of the general debate on international security I should like to make a few comments about the structure of our work in the First Committee.

First, let me recall the statement made earlier this afternoon by Ambassador O'Brien of New Zealand, in which he questioned the soundness of the distinction we have imposed upon ourselves between disarmament, on the one hand, and international security, on the other. He underlined that international security has in fact been a paramount consideration in all of the Committee's deliberations to this point.

Canada shares that concern and also wonders why the structure of our agenda - beginning with disarmament, moving to the question of Antarctica and ending with international security - should be such as to place artificial barriers between, rather than to emphasize the interrelatedness of, specific arms control and disarmament objectives and the overall goal of the maintenance of international peace and security. One need only review the statements made in the general debate on disarmament to see that most, if not all, delegations that spoke found it impossible to discuss disarmament without first situating it in the broader context of international security.

Canada believes that it is time to reconsider the structure of our agenda with a view to returning to the previous practice of beginning with a general debate on international security, as the chapeau for the Committee's consideration of all of its items. Delegations would be free to make separate statements on disarmament and on the question of Antarctica, as they saw fit. On the other hand, however, those that wished to combine all relevant aspects in one integrated statement at the outset would now be able to do so under an agenda item - "International security" - that itself encompasses all of these interrelated elements. I might add that I am speaking here only of a possible

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reordering of the general debates. The right to make statements on specific agenda items as they are considered would of course remain as before.

Canada does not believe that such a reordering will downgrade the importance of the topic of international security nor that of the specific agenda items included thereunder. On the contrary, we believe that the result will be to better reflect the central importance of that item in all the work of our Committee. Similarly, with respect to the disarmament items we would hope that the effect will be to highlight their fundamental relationship to international security.

It may also be true that a better focusing of our work might lead to less time over all in general debate and more time in consideration of specific agenda items. Areas of unnecessary duplication will be more obvious and therefore easier to avoid. If this proves to be the case, we will have further enhanced the effective functioning of this body and, therefore, its capacity to take advantage of the new opportunities now before it.

Let us take the example of the conventional arms register and consider the enormous effort expended by so many delegations from all parts of the world to ensure a successful launching of the register and of the evolutionary process embodied in it. In our view the Committee's very positive response to this initiative, despite the practical difficulties and divergent views, reflects a broad desire among the vast majority of member States to go beyond mere exhortation and to focus on concrete steps that we all might take to enhance international security.

In conclusion, with the paralysis of the cold war behind us there has been a dramatic increase in opportunities for concrete action in multilateral forums such as the First Committee. We must ensure that our working

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

procedures enhance this renewed capacity to act. Canada believes that a reordering of our agenda will be one modest step towards that end. Moreover, we believe that such a step is a logical complement to the changes in our work practices that have already taken place.

Chief among those changes - again, as Ambassador O'Brien of New Zealand has already noted - are the steady decrease in the number of draft resolutions the Committee has considered and the equally steady increase in the degree of consensus achieved. Less obvious, but most important of all in our view, is the fact that now, more than ever before, consensus draft resolutions reflect an agreed basis for action rather than a mere papering over of differences.

In conclusion, Canada hopes that other delegations will reflect on our proposal and make their views known in time for appropriate action to be taken with respect to the programme of work for the First Committee during the forty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to assure the representative of Canada that the Chair and the officers of the Committee will reflect on her proposal.

Mr. RAKOTONDRAMBOA (Madagascar) (interpretation from French): Before making my statement it is my pleasant duty to convey my delegation's sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your unanimous election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I support the words said about you since the beginning of our work, and my delegation too wishes to pay a tribute to your diplomatic skills, which have ensured our achieving appreciable results at this year's session. We should also like to congratulate the other officers of the Committee.

(Mr. Rakotondramboa, Madagascar)

International security, which is the subject of this debate, has undoubtedly been strengthened owing to the end of East-West tensions. The various regional or bilateral disarmament agreements recently concluded, with the addition of unilateral disarmament initiatives, particularly in the nuclear field, have reduced the risks of a global military confrontation. In spite of this, the immensity of the means of mutually assured destruction accumulated over decades and scattered about to elude a first strike have made it more difficult to control them even before their partial elimination. The danger of the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction has been aggravated by the resurgence of nationalism, xenophobia and extremism in countries that are experiencing overt or latent civil wars.

Without general and complete disarmament under international control, the uncertainty principle will dominate the future of mankind. The obsolescence of the military doctrines of the cold war furnishes us an opportunity to rescue from oblivion a fundamental element of the Security Council's mandate.

(Mr. Rakotondramboa, Madagascar)

Article 26 of the Charter of the United Nations provides that:

> "In order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, the Security Council shall be responsible for formulating, with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee referred to in Article 47, plans to be submitted to the Members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments."

In entrusting the Security Council with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, Member States are actually counting on the establishment of a collective-security system guaranteed by the United Nations which would have a monopoly of the use of force, in circumstances and according to rules consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter. To be credible, such a system must reserve to the Security Council the power of guidance, supervision and control with regard to the execution of the measures it has authorized.

An essential condition for the success of peace-keeping operations is that they are based on the political and moral authority of the United Nations as a whole. Such operations are authorized by the Security Council, placed under the command of the Secretary-General and financed by the General Assembly. The concerted work of the three major organs of the United Nations increases the effectiveness of operations in the field. It also promotes transparency in the workings of the system and preserves the democratic principles that underpin the decision-making process in the United Nations.

However, since prevention is better than cure, so that coercive action

(Mr. Rakotondramboa, Madagascar)

should be only a last resort, machinery to anticipate and prevent conflicts must be incorporated into the system of collective security. Apart from the possibilities provided by the Charter in the area of preventive diplomacy, we could imagine innovative, concrete and effective forms of early-warning actions. The Secretary-General should have sufficient resources for the collection and analysis of data on situations that might endanger international peace and security, so that he can inform the Security Council of those situations.

The Council itself should periodically review zones of potential conflict in order to take any necessary preventive measures. The Council or the Secretary-General should be able to send out fact-finding missions more often. The parties to a conflict should acquire the habit of submitting their disputes to the International Court of Justice. The binding jurisdiction of the Court should be universally accepted. Indeed, there can be no peace unless States agree to abide by common rules and to respect norms of international law and the decisions of the International Court of Justice.

A comprehensive concept of security must include not only military threats to international peace but also non-military threats, which involve such complex questions as human rights, decolonization, flagrant economic inequality both within nations and between them, poverty, famine, privation, debt burdens, disease, drug abuse, terrorism in all its forms, natural disasters and the deterioration of the environment.

Continuing environmental deterioration, resulting from the destruction of forests, drought, soil erosion, salinity and deterioration of water resources, loss of biological diversity, and air and water pollution, as well as climatic

(Mr. Rakotondramboa, Madagascar)

change and the destruction of the ozone layer, jeopardizes social and economic development. Protection of the environment is, however, an integral part of the development process, because the ecological crisis is closely linked to poverty, worsening health conditions and demographic pressure. It is to be hoped that the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development, scheduled to be held in Brazil in June 1992, will make it possible to develop strategies, within the context of increased national, regional and international efforts, to reverse the effects of ecological deterioration and to promote lasting development in all countries.

The economic reforms that have been undertaken in order to break out of underdevelopment are handicapped - when they are not totally nullified - by the collapse of commodity prices, the burden of external debt and the scarcity of available resources. The initial euphoria arising from the universal recognition that real development requires respect for civil and political rights and for all fundamental freedoms has now given way to a more sober evaluation of the nature and scope of the results we can expect. Formidable obstacles remain to be overcome, and it is difficult to strike a balance between economic, social and environmental reforms on the one hand and their political consequences on the other.

It is absolutely imperative that democratic gains should be made irreversible by the creation of a favourable global economic environment. The complexity of the problems involved requires the strengthening of multilateral economic cooperation. The current restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields and allied areas have already produced important decisions. Those reforms must be maintained and completed,

(Mr. Rakotondramboa, Madagascar)

so that our Organization can fully meet the needs of the international community.

Entrusted with a world mission to bring about peace based on justice, social progress, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the United Nations is the only body capable of meeting the challenges confronting us. International peace and security in the future depend upon our joint actions, our cooperation and our solidarity.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to inform the members of the Committee that I have been approached by some delegations requesting that the deadline for submitting draft resolutions under agenda items 67 and 68 be postponed until tomorrow, 26 November 1991, at 12 noon, in order to make it possible for the ongoing consultations to be successfully concluded. Accordingly, I should like to suggest that the deadline be postponed until 12 noon tomorrow, on the understanding that the so-called 24-hour rule be waived to enable the Committee to conclude its work as scheduled. May I take it that members of the Committee agree to the suggested postponement?

Mr. STEFANINI (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation wonders whether, if we postpone the deadline for submitting draft resolutions until tomorrow, the texts will actually be distributed before Wednesday morning. In these circumstances, will we still be able to take a decision on these draft resolutions on Wednesday? This point poses some difficulties for my delegation. We have no objection to postponing the deadline for submission of draft resolutions until tomorrow at noon, but in that case we will have some difficulty in taking a stand on these draft resolutions as early as Wednesday.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that the Secretary of the Committee wishes to express an opinion on this matter. I now call on him.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I certainly would not wish to outguess the Chairman; we have heard his remarks concerning the decision, followed by the statement of the representative of France. There is nothing much we can do on this matter except to assure members that we will do our best. Depending on how early we receive the texts of the draft resolutions, we will try to circulate them tomorrow afternoon if at all

(Mr. Kheradi)

possible. This would depend of course on the services we would need to rely upon in different units of the Secretariat. But we will try our utmost, if we receive the drafts by 11 a.m., or 11:30 at the latest - and it is my understanding also that one of the drafts might perhaps be available later this evening - to circulate them in the blue version if at all possible by tomorrow evening, and of course the Committee will then have to take a decision accordingly.

The CHAIRMAN: It looks as if there is at least a possibility that documents can be circulated in time to permit examination and discussion of them. I should therefore like to ask the representative of France if he is satisfied with the answer.

Mr. STEFANINI (France) (interpretation from French): If the draft resolutions are actually available tomorrow afternoon, my delegation will have no objection to our taking a decision on them on Wednesday morning.

The CHAIRMAN: May I take it that my suggestion is approved by the members of the Committee?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5:15 p.m.